To cret

YUGOSLAVIA: Boycott Disrupts Negotiations

Croatian President Tudjman boycotted yesterday's meeting of federal and republic leaders after the federal prosecutor accused him of treason for asking President Bush in a letter to help the development of democracy in Yugoslavia. The summit participants delayed considering terms for republic separation from Yugoslavia until 12 March. The national Army newspaper yesterday accused US defense attaches of helping the Croatians try to organize an armed rebellion.

Serbian nationalists and the military appear to be joining together to put Croatian leaders on the defensive. President Jovic, a Serb, probably ordered the prosecutor's charge in order to weaken Serbia's main rival in anticipation of tough negotiations over territorial issues. Tudjman may boycott summit sessions indefinitely, however, torpedoing the negotiating process. The Army views Croatian paramilitary forces as its greatest domestic challenge and clearly still hopes to reimpose centralized Communist rule.